

Testimony of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

To the Committee on Public Safety and Security

Tuesday February 15, 2011

Senator Hartley, Representative Dargan, members of the Public Safety and Security Committee, my name is Daniel McInerney. I am a Business Development Representative for International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. I am a licensed electrical contractor E1-104065 and a licensed assistant building official with the State of Connecticut. I am an inspector member of the International Association of Electrical Inspectors (IAEI) and an executive board member for the Connecticut Chapter of the IAEI and have been involved in the electrical industry for over thirty years. For eighteen years (1992- 2010) I was an electrical inspector in the Building Department for the City of Bridgeport.

I am here to express our support Raised Bill No. 6296 An Act Adopting the National Electrical Code, the International Plumbing Code, the International Mechanical Code, and the International Fuel Gas Code. Without burdening you with all of the details of the code making process I would like to briefly express my concerns. The National Electrical Code is revised in its entirety every three years, 2011 being the last revision. We are currently using the 2005 edition with supplements from the 2005 State Building Code. Each Code cycle revision has several thousand proposals for changes as well as several thousand comments submitted for review, a large number of them resulting in major changes to the National Electrical Code. All of these changes are for the purpose of practical safeguarding of persons and property from hazards arising from the use of electricity. The 2011 NEC has one hundred more pages of code requirements and text than the current 2005 NEC; many of these pages are significant changes in order to keep up with safety in a constantly changing technology. I feel the citizens of Connecticut should be protected by the latest nationally recognized code in a timely manner and not let several cycle revisions go by before they are adopted.

Other issues that arise are education. When a code cycle is skipped and the next one is adopted, it burdens everyone working in the industry to not only know the current cycle revisions but also the skipped cycle revisions. This is an extraordinary amount of information that needs to be accounted for in order to keep up safe electrical installations. Apprentices and students in the Vocational Technical Schools in Connecticut and Apprenticeship Programs are taught with curriculum that is based on the most recent editions of the NEC. Textbook publishers print their text to reflect the latest edition NEC. As the new addition of the NEC is printed it becomes more difficult to purchase older additions. Since 2005, electricians have been required to complete continuing education annually in order to renew their licenses. I am a very strong supporter of this requirement. By not adopting this Act, continuing education providers will only be conveying current changes to the NEC and not the changes from the skipped

cycle of changes from the previously adopted cycle. I feel this is a serious safety concern for everyone.

I believe that most organizations and members of the electrical industry are in favor of the adaptation of this Act. I feel that adopting the current revisions of the National Electrical Code in a timely manner will help to ensure safety of Connecticut citizens and their property. I urge you to support Raised Bill No. 6296. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully,

Daniel McInerney